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EDITORIAL.

THE GAZETTE desires to call the attention of its readers to the coming meeting of the American Association in Indianapolis. Every effort is being made to have a noteworthy botanical meeting, and as botanists claim to be the best organized scientific brotherhood in the country they should show their strength and spirit. A great railroad center, ample accommodations, and a hospitable people, speak well for comfort of travel and entertainment. In order to give more point and pith to botanical discussion, one of the topics was selected at the Toronto meeting and certain botanists were appointed to prepare papers upon special parts of it. "The geographical distribution of North American plants" is a subject of great interest to American botanists, and the botanists selected to present various phases of it are Watson, Macoun, Sargent, Britton, Underwood, Halsted and Coulter, all of whom have accepted their appointments. Many other botanical papers will be read before the biological section; while the meetings of the Botanical Club, always large in numbers and interest, will furnish ample opportunity for the more informal discussion of all sorts of botanical matters. The fact that a botanist, Dr. Goodale, is the president of the Association and the first botanist to serve in that capacity since Dr. Gray's presidency at the previous Indianapolis meeting, should still further stimulate a large attendance of botanists. Taken altogether, the programme is an unusually attractive one to botanists and back of it all, and more than papers, is the personal association of botanists, which makes them better friends and more generous rivals, and which enables them, amidst all the conflict of opinion, to recognize a common purpose and a downright goodfellowship. The GAZETTE, naturally, has something of a personal interest in this meeting, and in a certain sense is among the hosts that will warmly welcome as guests the whole botanical fraternity.

CURRENT LITERATURE.

Bacteriological technology.[1]

The title of this little book sufficiently describes its character. It is a hand-book of bacteriological methods for physicians. It contains, therefore, the more important methods only, and then in many cases modified to meet the conditions of work in a private laboratory where economy of space and of money is a necessity. The methods of preparing culture media and of staining are those in ordinary use and demand no special criticism. They are well and clearly stated, and the book gives the important operations of bacteriology in a concise and usable form. We have tested the book in a bacteriological laboratory during the past winter and have found it accurate and sufficiently full in its statements to enable the student to perform the operations described.

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[1] SALOMONSEN, C. J —Bacteriological Technology for Physicians: translated from the second revised Danish edition by William Trelease. Wood's Medical and Surgical Monographs, vol. iv, pp. 435—597, figg. 72, 8vo. New York: Wm. Wood & Co., 1889, $1,

The translation is well done and many of the most important criticisms of methods and practical hints have been added by the translator.

The defects of the work are those of all similar hand-books on the subject. The chief fault is the lack of sharp criticism of the methods and apparatus described, so that the student at a distance from larger institutions can readily tell what he wants for a given case. This is especially noticeable in the chapters on anaerobic cultures and moist chambers.

The improvised apparatus described is usually good and serviceable. One must doubt, however, whether a really practical hot-air sterilizer will be made from a cracker box, as even slight carelessness, almost unavoidable in beginners' work, would melt the solder out of much of the box. A sheet-iron box can be constructed cheaply enough to meet all practical considerations of economy.

The publishers have not done their duty by this manual. It is published as part of a series and is bound up with papers on the knee-joint and the eye. It has no index, table of contents, or running headings, and the book must be largely committed to memory before easy use can be made of it. This is asking too much. If a good index could be provided, and the book bound in cloth separately, it would find a place as a handy and practically useful laboratory manual. E. A. BIRGE.

The plants of New Jersey.

New Jersey has always been considered our most interesting eastern botanical field, a sort of Mecca for collectors, an unrivaled region for rare plants. The consequence is that it has cultivated an active race of botanists; and lying so near such centers of botanical activity as New York City and Philadelphia, it must have been more carefully explored than any other state. As a result, we have before us the very handsome and complete catalogue of plants[2] prepared by Dr. N. L. Britton, with the assistance of numerous botanists. The catalogue includes all groups of plants, and giving stations and collectors with considerable detail, it forms a bulky volume of more than 640 pages. The tabulation made at the end of the volume is interesting, and is as follows: Phanerogams 1919 (1348 dicotyledons, 558 monocotyledons, and 13 gymnosperms): Pteridophytes 76 (47 of which are Filicineæ): Bryophytes 461 (312 of which are Musci): Thallophytes 3021 (329 lichens, 987 algæ, and 1705 fungi): Protophytes 164 (111 of which are Cyanophyceæ). The total number of species and varieties enumerated is 5641. The catalogue is a credit to the state and to the botanists who have collected there; and it is to be hoped that other but less favorably situated states will at some time be able to make as complete a presentation of their plants.

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[2] N. L. BRITTON.—Catalogue of plants found in New Jersey. [From the final report of the State Geologist, Vol. II.] pp. 642. Trenton: 1889.